

Message Text

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TO SECSTATE WASHDC 4600

INFO AMCONSUL DURBAN

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AMEMBASSY PRETORIA

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SUBJ :BUDGET DEBATE ON DEFENSE

REF :A) CAPE TOWN 372

1. BEGIN SUMMARY. DURING PARLIAMENTARY DEBATE ON 1975-76 DEFENSE APPROPRIATION SAG OUTLINED PROGRAM FOR INCREASED PARTICIPATION OF BLACKS IN ARMED FORCES, NATURE OF MILITARY COOPERATION ENVISIONED BETWEEN ITSELF AND INDEPENDENT BLACK HOMELANDS, AND PLANS FOR NEW ARMAMENTS. DEBATE HIGHLIGHTED BY FIRECE ASSAULT ON PROGRESSIVE PARTY LAUNCHED BY MINDEFENSE P.W.BOTHA. END SUMMARY.

2. IN PRESENTATION OF RATIONALE FOR INCREASED MILITARY SPENDING OUTLINED IN 1975-76 BUDGET (REFTEL A), MINISTER OF DEFENSE P.W.BOTHA TOLD PARLIAMENT APRIL 24 THAT SOUTH AFRICA MUST BE READY TO DEFEND ITSELF IF DETENTE FAILS. HE REFERRED TO HOSTILE ACTIVITIES OF RUSSIA WHICH FIGHTING 'BY PROXY' INAFRICA, AS FURTHER REASON SOUTH AFRICAN DEFENSES SHOULD BE STRENGTHENED.

3. IN RESPONSE TO QUESTIONS PROMPTED BU CHIEF MATANZIMA'S
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RECENT ANNOUNCEMENT THAT THE TRANSKEI WILL HAVE ITS OWN

ARMY ONCE IT GAINS INDEPENDENCE,BOTHA SAID SAG WILL HELP INDEPENDENT HOMELANDS DEVELOP DEFENSE FORCES. INITIALLY, FORCES WILL BE HOME GUARDS TRAINED AS INFANTRY AND ENGINEERS. WHITE OFFICERS WILL LEAD TROOPS UNTIL SUITABLE TRAINED BLACKS BECOME AVAILABLE. BOTHA ALSO STATED THAT SAG WILL REACH AGREEMENT WITH HOMELAND GOVERNMENTS,PRIOR TO THEIR INDEPENDENCE,ON SUCH ISSUES AS OVERFLIGHT RIGHTS.'ANTI-COMMUNIST MEASURES', AND USE OF HOMELAND TERRITORY BY HOSTILE ELEMENTS. BOTHA MADE CLEAR IT ESSENTIAL THAT INDEPENDENT HOMELAND MILITARY FORCES BE WELL-TIED TO SAG, AND NOT FOREIGN,DEFENSE ESTABLISHMENTS.

4. HE ALSO OUTLINED PLANS TO BRING MORE BLACKS INTO SOUTH AFRICAN DEFENSE FORCES TO HELP ALLEVIATE SERIOUS SHORTAGE OF MANPOWER AVAILABLE FOR COUNTRY'S DEFENSE. COLOREDS WILL BE ADMITTED TO ALL SERVICES 'ON A LARGER SCALE' THAN PREVIOUSLY, AND SEVEN COLORED TRAINEE OFFICERS WILL SOON RECEIVE COMMISSION. INDIANS WILL ALSO BE GIVEN SAME OPPORTUNITIES, WHICH THEORETICALLY WILL LEAD TO COMBAT, RATHER THAN SIMPLY SUPPORT,FUNCTIONS. AFRICANS ARE NOW BEING INDUCTED INTO AUXILIARY SERVICE CORPS WHERE THEY CAN ADVANCE TO RANK OF NON-COMMISSIONED OFFICERS. SOMEAFRICAN TRAINEES CURRENTLY RECEIVING INSTRUCTION WILL,IN TURN, BECOME INSTRUCTORS THEMSELVES. BOTHA ALSO REVEALED THAT THE CABINET HAD APPROVED PLAN BY WHICH CERTAIN COMMANDOS (GOVERNMENT-CONTROLLED MILITIA) WILL BE ABLE TO FORM 'BANTU SECTIONS'. BOTHA'S STATEMENT ON SUBJECT FOLLOWS INTRODUCTION IN PARLIAMENT APRIL 15 OF AMENDMENT TO DEFENSE ACT WHICH REDEFINES TERM 'SUPERIOR OFFICER' AND, IN EFFECT, CODIFIES PRINCIPLE THAT WHITES WILL HAVE TO SALUTE BLACK OFFICERS.

5. BOTHA'S COMMENTS ON SADF PROPOSALS FORMPURCHASE OF NEW EQUIPMENT APPARENTLY ADDED NO NEW DETAILS BEYOND INFORMATION PROVIDED IN DEFENSE WHITE PAPER PRESENTED TO PARLIAMENT SEVERAL WEEKS AGO(CAPE TOWN A-64). HE DID STATE, HOWEVER, THAT NEGOTIATIONS FOR PURCHASE OF TWO MORE SUBMARINES ARE WELL-ADVANCED.

6. SIGNIFICANT INCREASE IN DEFENSE BUDGET HAS NOT BEEN UNCLASSIFIED

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SERIOUSLY CRITICIZED BY UNITED PARTY, THOUGH SEVERAL UP MPS HAVE ASSERTED THAT EXPENDITURES MIGHT PROVE FRUITLESS UNLESS ACCOMPANIED BY RELAXATION OF RACIAL TENSIONS AT HOME. PROGRESSIVE PARTY SPOKESMEN HAVE MADE SAME POINT AND HAVE, IN ADDITION, ATTACKED DEFENSE BUDGET AS INFLATIONARY. MINDEFENSE BOTHA'S ATTACK AGAINST PTOGRESSIVES PRIMARILY PROMPTED BY SPEECH APRIL 23 IN WHICH PROG MP VAN ZYL SLABBERT CRITICIZED ARMED FORCES INSTRUCTIONAL

HANDBOOK AS NATIONAL PARTY PROPAGANDA. BOTHA SAID THAT SLABBERT HAD PICKED ON ONE CHAPTER CONCERNING 'SPIRITUAL PREPAREDNESS AGAINST SUBVERSION' TO SOW DOUBT AMONG NATIONAL SERVICEMEN. HE ACCUSED PROGS OF CONTINUALLY INTERCEDING ON BEHALF OF 'SUBVERSIVE ELEMENTS' AND RAGED THAT 'IT IS TIME SOUTH AFRICA TOOK NOTICE OF PROGRESSIVE PARTY'S ACTION'

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